

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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P R 171012Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6356

USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

UNCLAS BRUSSELS 02663

USDOC FOR FIELD, OIM/BIC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, BE

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE PARTICIPATION IN BELGIAN-BASED COMMERCIAL FAIRS

1. DURING FIRST HALF OF CALENDAR YEAR 1977, EMBASSY BELIEVES TWO FAIRS WOULD MERIT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION BY USDOC FOR US PARTICIPATION.

2. MUNICIPAL EQUIPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION TECHNIQUES. THIS IS A COMBINED SHOW HELD EVERY TWO YEARS AT THE BRUSSELS INTERNATIONAL FAIR (PALAIS CENTENNAIRE). SHOW IS SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 4-12. MUNICIPAL EQUIPMENT PORTION FEATURES EQUIPMENT, GOODS, MATERIAL AND SERVICES WHICH ARE OF DIRECT INTEREST TO THE TECHNICAL SERVICES USED BY CITY AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES. IN LAST MUNICIPAL EQUIPMENT SHOW, HELD IN JUNE 1975, 133 EXHIBITORS PARTICIPATED, 17 FOREIGN COUNTRIES WERE REPRESENTED, AND 181 FIRMS HAD THEIR EQUIPMENT DISPLAYED BY ABOVE-LISTED EXHIBITORS. SHOW AREA TOTALED 7,747 SQUARE METERS. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION TECHNIQUES SHOW WAS HELD SIMULTANEOUSLY AT SAME SITE AND FEATURED ANTI-POLLUTION EQUIPMENT AND MATERIAL PLUS DISPLAY OF ANTI-POLLUTION TECHNIQUES BY FIRMS WITH PARTICULAR EXPERTISE IN THIS FIELD. FOR THIS SHOW, THERE WERE 49 EXHIBITORS REPRESENTING 97 FOREIGN FIRMS (IN ADDITION TO SOME BELGIAN FIRMS) FROM 14 DIFFERENT COUNTRIES. EXHIBITION  
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AREA COVERED 1,753 SQUARE METERS. TOTAL NUMBER OF

PROFESSIONAL VISITORS TO BOTH SHOWS AMOUNTED TO 6,611.

3. SECOND FAIR WHICH SHOULD BE OF INTEREST TO US EXHIBITORS IS EUROPLASTICA, WHICH AT PRESENT IS SCHEDULED FOR BRUSSELS IN MAY 1977. THIS SHOW IS HELD ONCE EVERY FOUR YEARS. IT IS ORGANIZED BY THE INTERNATIONAL FAIR OF GHENT, AND IT FEATURES MACHINES, RAW MATERIALS, SEMI-FINISHED PRODUCTS, TECHNIQUES AND APPLICATIONS OF PLASTICS. THE LAST EUROPLASTICA SHOW, HELD IN 1973 IN BRUSSELS, HAD 631 EXHIBITORS AND COVERED A SPACE OF 13,000 SQUARE METERS. VISITORS CAME TO THIS SHOW FROM 57 COUNTRIES.

4. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE EMBASSY CAN GET MILEAGE OUT OF THE MUNICIPAL EQUIPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION TECHNIQUES SINCE IT FALLS INTO THE POLLUTION CONTROL AREA AND LOCAL INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY IN THIS SECTOR IS EVEN NOW BEGINNING TO SHOW SIGNS OF RENEWED MOMENTUM. PLASTICS SHOW SHOULD NOT BE REGARDED ONLY AS POSSIBLE SITE FOR DISPLAY OF FOOD PACKAGING EQUIPMENT BUT SHOULD BE USED FOR FULL SCOPE INCLUSION OF PLASTICS INDUSTRY EVEN IF NOT SPECIFICALLY COVERED BY CCP.

5. POST DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY WILL HAVE SUFFICIENTLY RECOVERED FROM PRESENT SLUMP BY 1977 TO WARRANT U.S. PARTICIPATION IN BATIBOUW FAIR 1977. BELGIAN CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IS STILL

SUFFERING FROM OVER-CONSTRUCTION IN EARLY 1970S, AND SECTOR IS CURRENTLY CONSIDERED DEPRESSED. BY 1978, EMBASSY EXPECTS, AS A RESULT OF IMPROVED GENERAL LOCAL ECONOMIC SITUATION, INCREASED ACTIVITY IN LOCAL BUILDING/ CONSTRUCTION. THEREFORE, WE FEEL BATIBOUW - 78, SCHEDULED FOR SECOND QUARTER FY 78, WOULD OFFER MORE COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES TO U.S. PARTICIPANTS THAN 1977 SHOW. FIRESTONE

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